

# Governor Carney Announces New Director of Office of Innovation & Improvement

*James Simmons III, Brandywine School District's executive director of secondary education, is a district leader, former principal and teacher*

**WILMINGTON, Del.** – Governor John Carney on Wednesday announced that James Simmons III, who has extensive district and school leadership experience in the Brandywine School District, will take over as Director of the Delaware Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement.

Simmons starts June 3.

The Wilmington-based office, created in 2017, supports students and educators in Delaware's neediest schools with a focus on schools in the City of Wilmington.

*"We created the Office of Innovation and Improvement to make sure we are on the ground supporting schools with high percentages of low-income and English learner students, and providing additional resources for educators and students in those schools," said **Governor Carney**. "We need to make sure that we're helping all Delaware students get a world-class education, and I'm confident that Jim has the experience and leadership necessary to make a real difference."*

Governor Carney's [Fiscal Year 2020 budget proposal](#) also includes a three-year, \$60 million Opportunity Funding initiative to target resources toward disadvantaged Delaware

students.

**[Learn more about Governor Carney's Opportunity Funding initiative.](#)**

"Jim has an impressive career of leadership in one of the state's top-performing districts. He has the valuable experience and has built both the trust and relationships needed to lead our Office of Innovation and Improvement," said **Dr. Susan Bunting, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Education**. "I am delighted that he will be joining our team at the Delaware Department of Education."

"Our responsibility is to make sure that all Delaware children have access to a high-quality education – including students who may be struggling," said **Simmons**. "I look forward to collaborating with educators, building leaders and staff to support students and educators in Wilmington and across the state."

"This is a fantastic opportunity for Jim," said **Dr. Mark Holodick, Superintendent of the Brandywine School District**. "Like his predecessor, Dorrell Green, he will be able to use his skills and knowledge to positively impact even more students – not just in Brandywine School District, but in our neighboring districts and schools as well. While it is hard to lose a dedicated employee with so much history and institutional knowledge, we know that Jim will continue to do great things for students and families in Wilmington. Indeed, he will be an asset to the Department of Education and the Governor's Office."

"Jim Simmons is a student-centered, community-minded leader," said **Dorrell Green, Superintendent of the Red Clay Consolidated School District**. "He possesses the skill set and collaborative spirit that will help the Department advance the work of the Office of Innovation and Improvement."

Simmons takes over the role from Dorrell Green, who left the

position to become Superintendent of the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

Simmons currently serves as executive director of secondary education in the Brandywine School District. He graduated from Brandywine's Mt. Pleasant High School before attending West Point Military Academy Prep School. Simmons, who received two appointments to the United States Military Academy at West Point, attended the University of Delaware on a full football scholarship, and earned his undergraduate degree in earth science education. He later earned a Masters of Education in curriculum and instruction from Delaware State University.

Simmons has spent his entire career in Delaware schools, first working as a teacher and football coach at St. Mark's, Milford, Delcastle and Mt. Pleasant high schools. He moved into his first full-time administrative role in 2003, when he became assistant to the principal at PS duPont Intermediate School in Wilmington. He also served as assistant to the principal at Concord and Mt. Pleasant high schools before becoming Mt. Pleasant's principal in 2008.

In 2013, Simmons took a district leadership role, serving as Brandywine's climate and culture leader. He later led Brandywine High School's leadership for a year before moving to his current position in the district office in June 2015. He also serves as president of the Delaware Principal Academy.

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